000 civilized Europe as Bremen, the Pyrenees, Southern Italy and Byzantium. 6

173 Legendary references to this period abound among the Magyars. According to folk tales and chronicles, two sons of the giant Menrot, Hunor and Magor, moved to a new hunting ground in the swamps of Meotis, guided in their wanderings by a wondrous roe (csodaszarvas). Arriving at Meotis, they abducted the women of the family of King Dula, the Alan ruler. The offspring of Magor and Hunor became known, respectively, as Magyars and as Huns--a relationship which Hungarians have always been proud of. The leader of the tribal alliance of the Magyars at the time of the settlement (honfoglalás) was Árpád, founder of the House known by his name. He, in turn, is said to have descended from a huge eagle-like bird, the turul--just one example of the shamanistic totemism of the Magyar ancestors. Árpád himself is referred to by the Hungarians today as the founding father of the country, Árpád apánk, 'our father Árpád.'

175 797 At the turn of the millennium, chief Géza's son, István, educated in Christian beliefs, became the first king of the country. He was crowned in 1001 with a crown he had received from Pope Sylvester II. This "Holy Crown" is still considered the symbol of Magyar sovereignty. The complete conversion of the Magyars took several decades, but the open resistance of certain pagan clan chiefs was energetically suppressed by

István himself, who was later canonized. Szent István was never a subject in popular narrations, but one of his successors, Szent László (1077-1095), is depicted in several widely known legends as the prototype of Christian knighthood. 175 797

Under the reign of the House of Árpád, the Magyars were converted to Christianity and thus were subject to numerous important western influences, especially from missionaries, French, German and Slavic. Since then, the basic sources of Magyar civilization have been (a) its Oriental heritage, (b) the western influences as transmitted by the leading classes, and (c) elements borrowed either from the pre-Hungarian occupants of the Carpathian basin or from the neighboring, chiefly Slavic, peoples. [177]

Under the Árpáds the feudal system had not yet taken root; the king governed as a patriarch over a society in which servitude was not unknown, and in which his own power was based upon the huge domains which he possessed. 175

Being right on the boundaries of their spheres of influence, the Árpáds waged several wars against the Holy Roman Empire and Byzantium.

In 1241, the Tatars broke through the Carpathian mountains, defeated the Magyars and pillaged their country. The cruelty of the Tatars (Tatárdúlás) is still remembered and their name still recalls to the